

ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE

THE CRISPIEST TRIVIA MIX



Gear up with hot car prize

The race is on to grab the last of our fabulous £17k cars in our search for the nation's top trivia lovers.

You can either send us a fax or have a go at our big Number Cruncher below to be automatically entered in a draw for another Honda Civic Type R.

Nobby's crisps come in a bunch of fun flavours like Chip Shop Salt & Vinegar, Friday Night Balti Chicken, and Straight From The Grill Steak.

And there are five Number Crunchers to crack covering a host of everyday subjects.

Each Number Cruncher has a multiple choice question – simply pick the right answer to give you a figure.

Collect every day's digit, put them in a row of five figures (Mon-Fri), send them to us and we'll enter you into the brilliant competition all thanks to Nobby's Crisps.

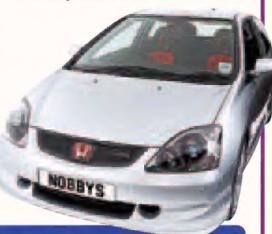
Here's a repeat of the week's Number Cruncher questions from our Nobby's Knows column - there's the final Friday question too.

Remember, all you have to do is pick the right sequence of numbers

and send them off to us in order. For a chance to win call us now on 0905 072 3631 with the winning code. You can also text or email us with your answer – competition@dailystar.co.uk with NOBBY'S CAR DRAW as the subject title. Entries must be received by Midnight, 27/11/05.

If you want to send us your trivia for another chance to be entered simply text TRIVIA to 88833 or email us at competition@dailystar.co.uk with NEWS FOR NOBBY'S as the subject title.

You can also send us your trivia by following Nobby's link on www.dailysnack.com.



For your chance to win this fabulous car call **0905 072 3631** with the winning code

THE BIG NUMBER CRUNCHER

MONDAY'S QUESTION

How many Queen Elizabeths have sat on the English throne?

A. 1 B. 2 C. 9

TUESDAY'S QUESTION

Complete the film title with the right number: The Magnificent

A. 7 B. 3 C. 9

WEDNESDAY'S QUESTION

If you have sextuplets – how many babies have you got?

A. 1 B. 2 C. 6

THURSDAY'S QUESTION

How many goals did England score in their 1966 World Cup final victory?

A. 4 B. 5 C. 6

FINAL FRIDAY QUESTION

Complete the phrase. Nobby's Crisps are number ___ for trivia.

A. 0 B. 1 C. 9

Terms & Conditions: 1. The prize is 1 (one) Honda Civic 2.0 VTEC Type R car. Features include standard specification for the afore mentioned model, the winner will have a choice of non-metallic colours, subject to availability at the time of booking. 6 months car tax and delivery of the vehicle to the Honda dealer nearest to the winner's home address. 2. The prize cannot be modified and there is no cash alternative in part or in whole. 3. The promotion is open to all residents of the UK aged 18 or over who hold a valid full driving licence, except for employees of the promoter, their families, suppliers, agents or associates. 4. The winner will be chosen at random from all entries received by 27/11/05. 5. The judge's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. 6. Winners may be required to participate in publicity. 7. Your prize is valid for 12 months from the date of winning, after which time it is considered expired. Premium rate phone line. Calls cost 75p per minute from a BT landline (Ave Call length 90 secs). Texts should be no longer than 160 characters. Texts cost £1.50 plus your usual operator rate. Winners will be selected from all entries received by midnight 27/11/05. Normal Daily Star rules apply.

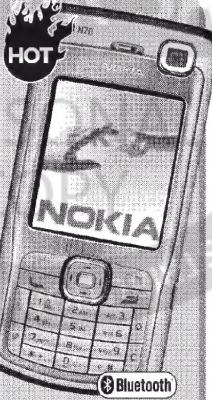
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TIN TO BE ON HIS METTLE

■ by JIM AUSTIN of the RACING POST

DENSE fog played havoc with Monday night's greyhound programme with the high-profile meetings at Nottingham and Henlow both badly hit, but the good news is that the heats of competitions postponed from then have been rescheduled for tonight - so it's just a small matter of them having to avoid the forecasted snow!

Quick-thinking Nottingham managed to bring forward the semi-finals of their Eclipse on Monday and go through them before the situation became unbearable, but it meant the supporting events - heats of the Betfred Casino 700 and Betfred The Bonus King Sprint - were postponed and they add spice to what would have otherwise been an all-graded card tonight.

The 700m competition looks the safest place for punters to dabble, with a trap four double on

the cards courtesy of Witton Magic (7.37) and Tinrah Lad (7.52), both fresh from good campaigns in the recent St Leger.

Indeed, the former ran an absolute stormer in the final of the stayer's pinnacle behind Greenacre Lin and a repeat of that sort of form should firmly put her opening heat opposition firmly in their place.

Tinrah Lad may have 'only' reached the semi-final stage of the Leger, but did so with some solid performances and, returning to the track over which he has done plenty of winning, will be hard to beat.

Punting in sprint races isn't the greatest of gambles, but the best of times and tonight's heats look particularly tricky, especially with a field of railers lining up in the second of them. Given the alternatives available, sit them out.

If the four-box is following for the stayers event at Nottingham, trap one is certainly the place to look in the opening heats of the Standon St Leger over 660m at Henlow, with Fear No Battle (7.35) and Allglaze Spider (7.49) looking particularly solid, as does Sober Thought (8.17), who can dominate the fourth qualifier from the outset.

Some good action is sure to be forthcoming at Romford over the next fortnight with its Essex Vase (575m) kicking off on Monday, but for tonight it is the routine weekly stuff with the



READY TO LAND ODDS: Tinrah Lad

first five races on the card uninspiring maiden events.

Moving off from trap one proved **Bowers King**'s (9.20) downfall in the Goodwood Cup heats at Walthamstow last week, so the switch back to home soil allied with the preferred number three on his back can see him return to winning ways after a lay-off.

Middle runner Any Time Now was in two last week which gave trap one runner Handsome Hog all the room in the world to go about his business. The pair clash again, but with the draws reversed, they could well come together handing the top 400m contest on a plate to Bright Prospect (10.24) out wide.

HENLOW TIPS

7.35	FEAR NO BATTLE	(trap 1)	Oneuponame (3)
7.49	ALLGLAZE SPIDER	(trap 1)	Riverside Sparky (2)
8.03	RHONAS FANCY	(1)	Blackmagic Guy (3)
8.17	SOBER THOUGHT	(4)	Return To Suir (1)
8.31	TOMS AUTUMN	(2)	Glenisle (3)
8.45	TIME ADDITION	(1)	Ashill Storm (3)
8.59	NIGHTMARE BOB	(1)	Bellairs (3)
9.13	UP THE INSIDE	(2)	Applaud The Kit (3)
9.27	NEWLAWN DAN	(4)	Lady Of Fortune (3)
9.41	UNLIKELY BRETT	(2)	Aulton Buster (3)
9.55	SUSSA PRIDE	(2)	Grumpy Troops (3)
10.09	PATTER PAWS	(3)	Hit The Spot (4)
10.23	MIDWAY LARKING	(3)	Penta Will (4)

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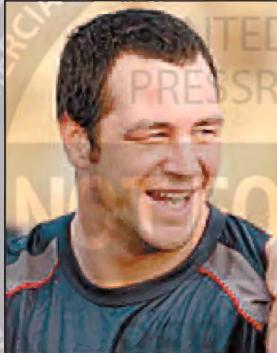
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MORLEY: International aid

Brit aces answer Morley's Oz plea

GREAT BRITAIN's entire front row – one of the few success stories of a disappointing Tri-Nations campaign – could be playing in Australia in 2007.

Prop Adrian Morley, who is about to begin his fifth season with the Sydney Roosters, wants as many leading English players as possible to join him in the gruelling NRL to boost the Lions' international competitiveness.

And there's a fair chance that Lions hooker Keiron Cunningham and front-rower Stuart Fielden, who were Britain's best players in the series, will take him up on his plea.

Cunningham has asked top Aussie agent David Riolo to find him an NRL club and Fielden has been targeted by the Gold Coast Titans, who enter the competition in 2007.

Titans chief executive Michael Searle and coach-elect John Cartwright are in England for Saturday's final and are also using their trip to recruit new players.

They are thought to have held preliminary talks with Bradford star

INSIDE RUGBY LEAGUE with Martin Richards

Fielden, having already signed up Lions vice-captain Brian Carney.

Fielden is single and would relish the lifestyle on the Gold Coast and he has long held ambitions to test himself in the toughest competition in the world.

The Titans are also lining up moves for two of Britain's brightest young stars – Leeds full-back Richard Mathers and Wigan loose forward Sean O'Loughlin.

CASTLEFORD are not exactly setting an example in a week when there have been calls to limit the number of overseas players to bolster Great Britain's future hopes.

The Tigers have already signed up Tongan forward Willie Manu and Penrith centre Luke Dyer – both non-quota players – to go with Aussie captures Danny Nuttley and Adam Dykes.

They could be joined by two Samoans and possibly ex-Sydney Roosters forward Luke Ricketson – who has an Irish passport – to underline why the present system is a farce. Next year's limit of three overseas players per club can be sidestepped far too easily.

NEW Leigh coach Tony Benson has made former London Broncos and Huddersfield Giants winger Lee Greenwood his 13th signing.

IT looks like the neutrals are backing Saturday's Tri-Nations final, even though Great Britain are not there.

More than 25,000 tickets have been sold for the Elland Road decider between Australia and New Zealand.

SECOND TEST: England plan rescue act despite flop

DRAW BLIMEY FOR VAUGHAN

CAPTAIN'S AGONY:
Vaughan after his dismissal and (inset) Strauss, who is now flying home for the birth of his child, goes for a duck



SCOREBOARD

Overnight: England 446, Pakistan 462 and 183-4 (Salman Butt).	
Pakistan Second Innings Cont	
100 ul-Hasan c G O Jones b Harmison..... 1	
Akhtar c G O Jones b Hoggard..... 14	
Sameri not out..... 30	
Kaneria not out..... 2	
Extras b4 w2 nb2..... 14	
Total: 183-4 (93.1 overs)..... 268	
Fall: 1-5 2-104 3-108 4-154 5-184 6-183	
7-187 8-234 9-244	
Bowling: Hoggard 16-1-50-3, Flintoff 27-1-2	
68-2, Harmison 15-2-50-1, Giles 17-5-1-0, Uddi 14-2-31-1.	
England Second Innings	
Trescothick c Shoaib Akhtar..... 0	
Strauss b Naved-ul-Hasan..... 0	
Vaughan lbw b Naved-ul-Hasan..... 9	
Bell lbw b Naved-ul-Hasan..... 0	
Pietersen c Sub b Naved-ul-Hasan..... 42	
Flintoff c Sub b Naved-ul-Hasan..... 56	
Jameson..... 30	
Giles not out..... 13	
Extras b4 lb2 nb2..... 14	
Total: 183-4 (93.1 overs)..... 154	
Fall: 1-5 2-104 3-108 4-154 5-184	
6-183 7-187 8-234 9-244	
Bowling: Akhtar 11-2-61-3, ul-Hasan 12-3-30-3, Sami 6-184, Kaneria 12-4-27-0, Airlie 7-2-104.	

MICHAEL VAUGHAN didn't know whether to laugh or cry as England's hopes of a seventh-successive series win were ground into the dust yesterday.

For the disappointment of not levelling the series was overshadowed by massive relief that they didn't lose after England crashed to 20-4 – with Marcus Trescothick, Andrew Strauss and Ian Bell all out for ducks.

And after being set a mission impossible 285 to win off 64 overs, Vaughan himself could make just nine.

But Andrew Flintoff and Kevin Pietersen stopped the rot before Geraint Jones and Ashley Giles brought the team over the line in fading light on a shaky 164-6.

The first pair came together at 20-4 with Pietersen going straight on the counter-attack, only to fall just before the end of the second session for 42 when a bat-pad connection saw him loop a catch to short mid-wicket off Rana Naved-ul-Hasan.

Job

Flintoff then completed a precious 86-ball half-century shortly after tea.

But he too could not quite see the job through, holing out to gully for 56 trying to pull Shoaib Akhtar, which left Jones and Giles to defy Pakistan's last surge.

England now need to win in Lahore next week to square the series but will be without Strauss, who is returning to England for the birth of his first child.

Vaughan said: "It is a blow but we still have a chance of drawing this series. When you come to this part of the world a draw isn't a disaster."

England's first major problem was Vaughan's opposite number Inzamam-ul-Haq, who battered his second century of the match, finishing on 100 not out as Pakistan kept at 268-9.

And, while Vaughan knew that reaching their target was never on, he had not counted on losing three of his top four batsmen for ducks as Rana (3-30) and Shoaib (3-61) came rampaging in with the new ball.

Vaughan added: "When you are 20 for four to get out with a draw you are happy. They put us under

a lot of pressure with that new ball and bowled very, very well.

"We had to take early wickets – and most importantly Inzamam's wicket.

"We thought we had a couple of decent shouters against him last night, but he played so well and probably was the difference between the sides.

"We knew we had to get them out in the first 15 overs – but once that had gone we tried to delay the declaration so that we would have to bat the fewest number of overs we possibly could."

England's batting looked a mess early on with former Mr Reliable Trescothick losing his off-stump, playing no shot to the pace and swing of Shoaib in the one over before lunch.

Hint

Strauss could do no better, going back when he should have been forward to a Rana delivery which kept low and nicked into his stumps.

First-innings century maker Bell was caught behind off Shoaib, then Vaughan himself went lbw to Rana.

But coach Duncan Fletcher also hinted at bowling changes in Lahore for the Third Test saying: "These wickets looked like two spinners' wickets but we might have to go with one spinner and add a seamer to our attack because they seem to be doing a lot of the work and getting the wickets."

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What's the biggest mistake most new online poker players make? Simple! They play too many hands. How many times have you decided to take your distinctly mediocre hole cards through to the flop in the hope that you'll snare a high pair or even three of a kind? Hope is like charity. If you need either, you're already in trouble. There's actually a mathematical reason why this kind of behaviour will lose you money: it's against the odds!

ODDS CALCULATORS

We've touched on odds calculators before and we asked for feedback to dailystarpoker.com from players who've used them. There seems to be a majority in favour and here's why. Using mental arithmetic to try and calculate the odds of a hand being successful is not easy for most people. If you're playing online, using an odds calculator to give you feedback instantly on the value of your hand, can be quite a boon to a serious competitor. An odds calculator will tell you the relative strength of your hand as a percentage and tell you the "Sklansky Starting Hand Group" that it falls into.

Using the "Sklansky" valuation system, pocket Aces at a table of ten players would be in Sklansky Group 1 and be valued at 100% whereas a pair of Two's would only make Group 7 and have a hand ranking a little over 60%. These figures apply for hands reaching the river.

BEYOND THE OBVIOUS

Clearly, no poker player needs telling that pocket rockets is a 100% start to a hand but let's say you had to quickly evaluate the relative values of say Ace of Spades and Queen of Hearts as hole cards against Queen and Nine of Diamonds. We're betting most new players' instant reaction would be that the Ace-Queen would be the better hand. The odds calculator will tell you right away that Queen-Nine same suited is superior.

HELPS POSITIONAL PLAY

Position in Texas Hold'em is all important. If you're in a good position you want to play more hands. If you're in a bad position you want to play less hands. The calculator allows you to adjust your starting hand settings in relation to where you're seated.

Obviously, playing from the button is the best position in Hold'em. If you're on the button the calculator will automatically set your hand rank requirement to 50%. If you pick up a hand ranked lower than 50% the calculator will suggest that you fold. If you're "under the gun" as the player to the left of the big blind (the worst position) your hand rank requirement will go to 85%. Know your odds.

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BIG-FIGHT COUNTDOWN: Carlos' call

I'LL RICK YOU TO SHREDS!



I'M READY TO RUMBLE: Ricky Hatton squares up to Carlos Maussa yesterday

SPORTWORD

ACROSS

1. Kim, gymnastics Olympic champion in 1976 and 1980 (5)
4. Becker, Wimbledon men's singles champion on three occasions (5)
7. Tony ... won snooker's world double title with Steve Davis (3)
8. Jim ... won Commonwealth world champion in 2004 (5)
9. Mike Cardiff, Bedford and Wales rugby full back (5)
10. Sebastian motor rally driver (4)
11. Hammer ... won Grand National winner in 1988 (6)
14. Tony WHU, Everton, Leicester City and England striker (6)
15. Mark Bolton, Charlton Athletic and Scotland striker (4)
18. and 23 across. Grand National winner in 1984 (5,5)
20. Villa, Premiership club (5)
21. The nickname of Morton FC (3)
22. ... Conforti, gymnastics Olympic champion in 1976 and 1980 (5)
23. See 18 across

DOWN

1. Peter top British squash player (5)
2. Robert, Portsmouth and France forward (7)
3. The Red nickname of Lincoln City (4)
4. Australian captain who played for Essex (6)
5. Reuben, snooker world champion on six occasions (3)
6. Bryan male Canadian sprinter (5)
12. Leicester City, Nottingham Forest and England goalkeeper (7)
13. Sport sometimes known as jai-alai (6)
14. Northampton and England wing three-quarter (5)
16. Arsenal and France striker (5)
17. Eoin ... former Eire football manager (4)
19. Burrough Hill Cheltenham Gold Cup winner in 1984 (3)
20.
21.
22.
23.

CALL 0905 072 3266 FOR TODAY'S SOLUTION. Calls cost 75p per minute from a BT landline. Turn to Page 73 for yesterday's answers.

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Maussa's new blast at Hatton

■ by KEVIN FRANCIS

RUGGED Colombian Carlos Maussa says he will rip Ricky Hatton's dreams to shreds when the pair meet in their unification showdown clash tomorrow.

WBA world light-welterweight champion Maussa challenges IBF king Hatton at the Sheffield Arena - and he is promising to take full advantage of Hatton's notoriously suspect eyes.

Maussa declared: "I will be aiming to cut those eyes of his and bring about a stoppage.

"I know all about the fact that Hatton has had problems over the years with cuts around his eyes and he will never have come up against anyone who throws as many punches as I do.

"I can't see it going the distance. I will finish the fight early and take the IBF belt away from Hatton because I am not just over here for the money."

Maussa, 34, won his belt with a shock seventh-round victory over Vivian Harris in Atlantic City in June and simply can't wait to add Hatton to his list of conquests.

Ready

He said of the Mancunian, who has a perfect record of 39 straight wins: "I have wanted to fight Ricky for a number of years but I was never given the opportunity. Now it has come along and I am more ready than ever for it.

"It doesn't bother me to be the underdog. I am fighting in Hatton's country but that does not affect me at all, even though I know the home crowd will be right behind him."

Both fighters agree that it is a potentially explosive confrontation.

And Hatton said: "This will be a real thrill for the fans - they will be the winners. There will be fireworks, that's for sure. It will be a rough and tumble affair."

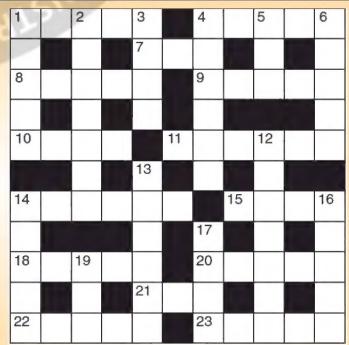
Maussa added: "I can see us being involved in a real tussle. We are both very attacking and that should make for a great spectacle."

Hatton's trainer Billy Graham said: "This fight certainly won't be for the squeamish, it will be explosive and I can't see it going the distance."

Whoever wins will be the genuine light-welterweight champion."

Hatton, 27, looks in fantastic shape with Graham adding: "I keep saying he is approaching his peak but he still keeps getting better and better."

"He has every punch in the book in his armoury but, as he has got older, he has got better with the kind of experience that will certainly count."





Text Dssport followed by a space, then your name and comment, and send to 61616. Texts cost 25p plus your normal mobile operator cost.

TEXT DSSPORT TO 61616

Robson get keano he is still best midfielder in premiership by a mile. Gav dudley baggle
 Jackster who r u sidin with this yr if u make it we'll show u how many we get u sad jack t***. ccafe trev
 2 goomer, yawn 'chelsea bought title' tinkerma prov'd u cant buy title U still nd grit manager n team spirit. Look up jealousy penny mite drop. MeadskiCFC
 Keane 4 m c c we don't want da scums O.A.P's day tink e is past it so why wud we want im + alfie h wont to b apy c o m stadium is no grave yard. city till i die

F*** me jackster i didn't realise there were 3 teams in wales you've been S*** for that many years i thought you'd given up! Young Kilshaw Wrexham F.C.

I will sue Charlton for discrimination if they try and ban all honest united fans from their ground due to the actions of 1 idiot. Danny MUFC

To jan belfast? so man u r in free fall r they? how can a club with rooney and ronaldo to of the best young players around be in free fall? we bin around for 120 years so i dnt think so! oh and beckham was so god against barca the otha night! ur a muppet! red army! manc

Wen we get wright, maccartney, arca etc bk we'll be out 2 prove a point... wba done it last season we can do it, keep the faith sunderland fans! COL C SAFC

Sunderland afc - HA HA WAT A JOKE. Tom Toon

To daveban newcastle are a joke ftn newcastle scum. Safc 4 eva. beigy safe

HOW COME A SO CALLED BIG TEAM LEEDS COULD NOT FILL THERE GROUND AGAINST YORKSHIRES NUMBER 1 THE BLADES WHAT RUBBISH SUPPORT U HAVE. CATCH US IF U CAN UP THE BLADES. BIG T

Heaven help England shud McClaren get the job aft sven HE is why England play players out of position-same as boro. He's 2loyal 2names instead of form players-crap manager. NED STOCKTON

UTD win one game & they all text in. CHELSEA lose and no sign of thier fans. What S*** fans, lady blys the lot of em. LFC. Never walk alone. RedRascal

Norwich goin down. there all a bunch inbreds cum on delta les b avin ya! ife still da pride of east anglia! Tractor stu

McNuff good enough? Ha Ha. Burg CFC

To dragon ifc yes we will see your sorry little red a***'s in december do us a favour till then shut ya mouth. 5 times get over it. chris efc

Why do kopites think their opinion matters an they are always right. no one cares about you so give it a rest, you hurt my ears an your boring. EFC JEDI

To gretna goddess theres only 1 team in scotland up the berwick. rick

IT'S A DANNY OLD GAME

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Keano was spot-on... Fergie has blown it

WORDS OF WISDOM:
Roy Keane told the truth but that led to his departure



ROY KEANE was right – Sir Alex Ferguson IS losing his grip.

Quieroz should never have been allowed to return. So many people have said Fergie had no choice to get rid of Keane after he had destabilised the club, and the best way to be was ruthless.

The same should have happened three years ago, though, when Fergie changed his mind about retiring.

It was obvious the legendary Scot had reached the end of the road, and the mess United are now in is a consequence of that.

If United's board had been as brave as Fergie was and got rid of their controversial boss, the club may have started winning titles again, and the Glazers may never have stepped foot into Old Trafford.

Now look at the club. They are not only under threat by Chelsea on the pitch in the last three years and, with Vodafone ending their shirt sponsorship, the same is happening off it.

If fans thought a crisis was just around the corner after Keane's exit, it is now looking them full in the face.

Downhill

United are standing on a precipice, looking dangerously like they might fall over the edge. And most of that can be traced back to Ferguson.

Ever since his battle with John Magnier over racehorse Rock of Gibraltar, United have been going downhill.

Keane bravely mentioned this, and fell foul of Fergie's wrath.

But the danger was the Irish midfielder's remarks were too close to the bone, as were his comments about so many of the current crop of United stars not being good enough – AND that Carlos

Quieroz should never have been allowed to return. So many people have said Fergie had no choice to get rid of Keane after he had destabilised the club, and the best way to be was ruthless.

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Spent

OK, so they are expanding into sponsorship of the Champions League, but they could have seen out their deal with the deposed champions, and did not think it was worth it.

If United had been top of the league by 10 points and through to the latter stages of the European Cup, do you think they would still be pulling out? No way.

But such decisions come

IS Danny right about Jose Mourinho? Let him know your views. Text DSDANNY followed by a space then your views to 61616. Texts cost 25p plus normal operator rate. Or send him an e-mail to danny.fullbrook@ dailystar.co.uk

down to results, and that is the manager's responsibility. Since 1999 United have come nowhere near repeating their European Cup triumph as Fergie has spent more than £250m rebuilding the team.

He has failed to replace his golden generation of David Beckham, Paul Scholes, Ryan Giggs, Nicky Butt and the Neville brothers. His midfield buys, the likes of Juan Sebastian Veron, Eric Djemba Djemba, Kleberson and Liam Miller, have all been a waste of money.

Fergie has failed to take

the club forward, especially in Europe. And if they do not beat Benfica in their last group game they will face the humiliation of not making the last 16, which will cost the club £15m.

No wonder Keane was so eager to jump ship. He was not man who slips quietly below the surface.

Fergie's days at United are over. And a 3-1 win against an out-of-form Charlton last weekend just papered over the cracks.

He can no longer inspire his team, which equally is no longer good enough. If he could, then they would

have responded on Tuesday against Villarreal, especially with the Spaniards missing three key players.

It is now time for Fergie to show some class. If United fall on December 7 against Benfica in Lisbon, he should do the decent thing and quit, giving United a chance to start again.

If it all goes wrong, and he doesn't, beware Real Madrid coming knocking next summer for United's crown jewel Wayne Rooney.

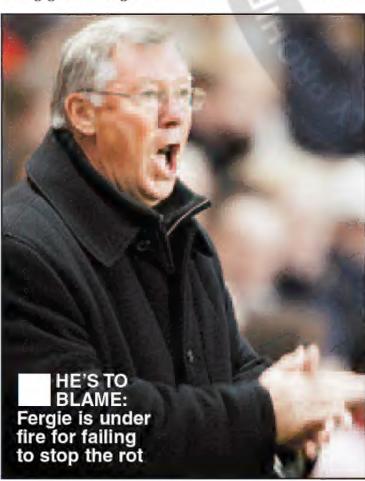
Money

Because, believe me, with a £500m debt to service by then, the Glazers may need the Spanish club's money.

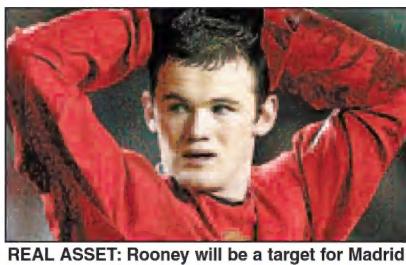
JUST a few words for the Pompey fans who roundly abused me when I criticised Milan Mandaric for getting rid of Harry Redknapp. I told you so.

It was the worst thing the Pompey owner could have done, and nothing has made me change my mind.

I wish the club good luck, but they would have been better off with Redknapp and Jim Smith. But they were too popular for Mandaric's liking.



HE'S TO BLAME:
Fergie is under fire for failing to stop the rot



REAL ASSET: Rooney will be a target for Madrid



SERIOUSLY
football

Anton vows to play alongside Rio for England

BROTHERS IN ARMS



■ by PETER WHITE

HARRY REDKNAPP last night predicted the Ferdinand brothers will one day line up side-by-side in the England team.

Manchester United's Rio, 27, is already a regular for his country and Anton, 20, is starting to earn rave reviews at West Ham in his debut Premiership season.

The pair clash for the first time at Upton Park on Sunday and Southampton boss Redknapp will be there to watch the two players who came through his former Academy at West Ham.

Redknapp said: "I will be delighted the day Rio and Anton stand alongside each other at the heart of England's defence – it will happen, no doubt about it.

"Anton has terrific pace and is comfortable on the ball, just like Rio.

"I have no doubts at all that he has the class to go on and win international honours."

And Anton himself also has his eyes on joining Rio in the full squad.

The West Ham defender said: "It would be a dream come true for the whole family. I'm ambitious and I want to play at the highest level, which means England. I won't rest until I've done that."

"I'm playing for the U21s at the moment and the next step is the seniors, so it isn't too far away."

But Anton's biggest problem is the formidable list of centre-halves standing in his way. As well as Rio, there is Sol Campbell, John Terry,

Jonathan Woodgate, Ledley King and Jamie Carragher all bidding for a game into the centre of England's defence.

Wall

But Redknapp believes he has the class to do it. He said: "I don't think anyone doubted Rio would make it right to the top."

"Anton showed similar talent at the start but then he seemed to hit a bit of a brick wall."

"He had a little spell when he

outgrew his strength and got a bit leggy. He didn't develop as quickly as Rio, who was firmly established in West Ham's first team by the time he was 17."

"After I had left Upton Park one or two people who were keeping a close eye on him rang me and told me that his career had come to a standstill."

"However, full marks to Anton who stuck at it. It is always more difficult to follow in big brother's footsteps."

Fergie clocks end of his reign



SIR ALEX FERGUSON has set the clock ticking on his reign as Manchester United boss by admitting: "I don't have a long time left."

Ferguson is facing his most crucial game in 15 years when United battle for Champions League survival against Benfica in Lisbon next month.

The 63-year-old, on a one-year rolling contract, has watched Arsenal and Chelsea overtake United in recent seasons.

He insists hopes of clinching more trophies will have to be fulfilled at United – because he will not be taking another job.

Ferguson said: "I don't have a

long time left but I still have some time left I hope!"

"When I complete my service, I will retire and I will deserve it."

"I'm finished once I leave Manchester United."

Meanwhile, Gary Neville admits he may be forced to wait until next week's Carling Cup clash with West Brom to boost his United comeback.

Neville, 30, ended 10 weeks on the sidelines with a substitute appearance in the Champions League stalemate against Villarreal on Tuesday.

The England defender, who has

now overcome a groin injury, also made a 70 minute appearance in a reserve game against Manchester City which United won 4-2 on Wednesday.

Matches

Neville is now eyeing a start against West Brom after admitting Sunday's Premiership trip to West Ham may be too much, too soon for him.

He said: "Whatever happens at the weekend, I am definitely looking to get a game next week against West Brom because I need matches."

"I just want to build my minutes on the pitch and the

training ground because I have only been back a couple of weeks and I need to get a lot better."

"We have been down to 12 or 13 players in the last few weeks."

■ ALAN PARDEW is ready to hand Roy Carroll the chance to prove Sir Alex Ferguson was wrong to show him the door at Manchester United.

The Northern Ireland international, who arrived at Upton Park on a free in the summer, will return from a knee injury to face the Red Devils at Upton Park on Sunday.

He will replace stand-in stopper Shaka Hislop, who Pardew admits has been impressive.

■ KEN BATES wants to honour Leeds legend Billy Bremner by building a pub inside Elland Road and naming it after him.

■ JOHN FILAN has been told he will keep his place in the Wigan team to face Spurs tomorrow despite his blunder against Arsenal.



Becks to put England first

DAVID BECKHAM says he will NEVER quit England to prolong his club career.

Beckham has been told years of twisting his back muscles to take free-kicks have taken their toll and rest may be the only solution.

The problem flared-up again in Real Madrid's Champions League game against Lyon this week but the England skipper won't copy Alan Shearer, who retired early from international football to help him overcome his injuries.

Beckham said: "I never

want to quit playing for England. For me it is one of the biggest honours, especially being captain.

"I will never want to retire up until the point a manager comes and says to me 'You are not in my plans'.

"That is when I will look at it."

Beckham has also warned his team-mates that they must start performing on the pitch.

He said: "If we don't work hard and run then we are not going to win anything this season."



ALL FRIENDS: Joe Cole and Hernan Crespo celebrate Carvalho's goal at Anderlecht

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CRESPO IS A TOP GEEZER

JOE COLE admits Chelsea's England players have let Hernan Crespo off the hook for calling them "fags" and "whores".

The striker and his Argentina team-mates chanted the abuse about England before their clash in Geneva nearly two weeks ago.

Cole, John Terry and Frank Lampard had the last laugh with a 3-2 win as they have refrained from taunting Crespo in case the countries meet again at next year's World Cup.

Cole said: "He has been as normal since the England game. It was just a sing-song, wasn't it?"

Pressure

"The singing thing was a lot of fuss about nothing."

"He's a great geezer, an excellent player and we are happy to have him at Chelsea. The England boys have not really given him any grief."

"We don't want to say anything because we might have to play Argentina again in the World Cup."

Crespo's third goal in four games against Anderlecht has helped the Blues clinch their place in the last 16 of the Champions League.

And Cole said: "We have got two world-class strikers. Crespo showed that in Brussels, particularly with his finish."

It was only a month ago that

by DANNY FULLBROOK

Crespo's Chelsea future was in real doubt. Speculation was rife that he was about to be dumped by Jose Mourinho after refusing to travel to Sevilla for the Real Betis game to sit on the bench, despite Didier Drogba being injured.

He was then left out of the squad for the defeat by Manchester United but played and scored for Argentina against England a week later.

Despite their differences, Mourinho has shown faith in the 29-year-old with two consecutive starts against Newcastle and Anderlecht.

The Chelsea boss knows he will need Crespo goes away for five weeks to play in the African Nations Cup.

Cole added: "You just know that when he plays he will score goals and I cannot speak highly enough of him."

Crespo himself was delighted to score and now wants to beat Liverpool to top spot in their group.

He said: "It was very important to get to the last match without any pressure to qualify and we are happy we have done."

"I am playing in a great team and know sometimes I will be on the bench and sometimes I will play. When I play I do my best."

"I am sure we will try to beat Liverpool and then wait to see who we can play."

OK for Kanu

■ by DAVE ARMITAGE

KANU has convinced boss Bryan Robson he can be a key man in West Brom's scrap for survival.

Robbo was ready to show the former Arsenal ace the exit door because he did not think he had the mindset for the fight.

But Nigerian Kanu, 29, has proved Robson wrong.

Robson said: "His mentality has now hardened to what he knows we need at this club.

"He's played for Inter Milan and Arsenal and I got the impression Kanu didn't enjoy getting beaten most weeks when he was used to winning.

"This season he knew it would be a tough challenge again and he's responded.

"Although people may think he's laid back, I can assure them Kanu is an absolute winner and does not want to be defeated."

Reid the riot act

■ by NEIL JOHNSTON

STEVEN REID last night warned Arsenal that inform Blackburn have their sights fixed on Europe.

Mark Hughes' outfit have pocketed 13 points out of 21 to raise hopes of snatching a UEFA Cup spot.

And Reid, 24, said: "The way we are playing at the moment, why not?

"We are not going to get carried away but if you look at Chelsea, they are running away with it.

"The rest are all capable of beating each other so you don't know where a few wins might take you.

"We are going into games expecting to win and that is down to the manager. He had a winning mentality in his career and I think he's instilled that into us."

Hughes will be without David Bentley at Highbury as the loan-signing can't play against his parent club.

Bruce's backed

■ by DAVE ARMITAGE

DAVID DUNN has told Birmingham's snipers to shut up and get off manager Steve Bruce's back.

The £5.5m midfield ace is fed up with the critics calling for Bruce's head after the club's dismal start to the season.

Dunn said: "I hear the things people have been saying and I've read some of the letters in the local paper and to be honest it's b****ks."

"Perhaps I shouldn't get involved but I'm prepared to stand by my opinion. It is ridiculous that the manager is under pressure."

"He got the club promotion after so many years and he took Birmingham to their highest league position in 31 years."

"People tend to forget that and that he has the sort of personality to attract big players."

SERIOUSLY
football

Perrin finally given the boot by Milan

POMPEY WAIT ON WARNOCK



TOLD YOU SO: Danny Fullbrook revealed Pompey wanted Warnock on November 9

Main target must decide on switch by weekend

PORTSMOUTH will give Neil Warnock until this weekend to quit Sheffield United and become the new boss at Fratton Park.

Pompey supremo Milan Mandaric, who finally sacked French manager Alain Perrin yesterday, made high-flying Blades boss Warnock his No.1 target weeks ago when he decided Perrin's days were numbered.

The struggling Premiership outfit believe Warnock will tell the Sheffield United board this weekend that he wants to quit the club.

But a source close to Mandaric has told *Starsport* he is worried about the compensation package he will have to pay the Championship outfit.

Warnock has only six months left on his current contract after United refused to extend it in the summer.

But there is a complicated compensation amount linked to his deal which could cost the south coast club as much as £500,000.

Pompey are prepared to double Warnock's wages to about £800,000-a-year to lure him to the club.

Frame

There is also concern that Warnock may change his mind at the last minute and try and use Portsmouth's interest to land himself at Bramall Lane.

Portsmouth have already sounded out George Burley in case Warnock does not take the job, but the former Hearts, Derby and Ipswich boss was not interested.

Former Chelsea and Newcastle boss Ruud Gullit is also in the frame.

The Dutch superstar is eager to return to English football and Mandaric said: "People know he wants to come back and he is a good name in football."

Perrin, who joined Portsmouth last April as the supposed new saviour, departed yesterday with a record of just four wins

EXCLUSIVE by DANNY FULLBROOK

in 21 matches and having allegedly driven many of his squad crazy.

Time and again his players, led by Serb skipper Dejan Stefanovic, pleaded with him to adopt a more attacking approach, particularly at home where Pompey have failed to win in April 24.

But Perrin flatly refused, and insisted on using only one striker, a policy which yielded a miserable 10 points and 11 goals from the opening 13 games this season.

After yesterday's sacking, central defender Stefanovic could hardly conceal his delight, crowing: "This will be a big lift for the players."

"The mood was all right, but now it will be much better. He got on with some players, but not with others."

"Of course, everyone has a different opinion of the manager but now it's all over and we're looking forward to



PERRIN: Fired by Mandaric

winning some games as soon as possible."

Coach Joe Jordan now takes over as caretaker boss and Stefanovic added: "Joe knows everything about the players here and English football."

"He will change things that weren't working out before."

"We will see but, hopefully, we will have two strikers playing against Chelsea this weekend."

"I expect a quick appointment and I want to see a British manager here."

"We have lots of foreign players, now we need more British mentality for the Premiership, someone with fighting spirit."



MALBRANQUE: Target

Rafa Branques on Mal

■ by BILL THORNTON

LIVERPOOL will make a move for Fulham's Steed Malbranque in January and ship Harry Kewell out to Aston Villa.

Rafael Benitez wants Malbranque in the transfer window after losing patience with Kewell.

The Aussie flop looks set to link up with his former Leeds boss David O'Leary, with the Villa manager confident he can get the best out of the player.

French ace Malbranque, 25,

through to the last 16 of the Champions League after their draw with Real Betis on Wednesday, can offer Malbranque the lure of European football.

Convert

And winger Bolo Zenden insists the Reds can convert their superb Euro form to the Premiership.

He said: "We're in a good run of form at the moment and we

want to continue that in the league."

Trips to Manchester City and Sunderland and a home match with Wigan come before Liverpool's final Champions League game against Chelsea in a clash to determine who will top Group G.

Former Chelsea ace Zenden added: "It will be a nice game. Both teams know they are through and they are going to fight for that top spot."

SERIOUSLY
football

SALUTE TO A LEGEND: Star who first put the

The Irish charm of a genius

GEORGE BEST was touched by genius and cut a vividly entertaining figure for a decade in the 60s as a player for Manchester United.

People loved him as both a fantastic player and a bad boy, perhaps because he cocked a snook at life itself as he pursued a lifestyle that was bound to catch up with him in the end.

The boy from Belfast had made an indelible mark on the soccer world by 26, the age when he turned his back on playing serious football to open a nightclub in Manchester that he called Slack Alice.

It was a typical Bestie gesture and a reflection of his life at the time that, as he was always the first to admit, was centred a great deal on birds and booze.

He was in the fast lane all right with a stunning girlfriend, Carolyn Moore – the reigning Miss Great Britain – on his arm when he decided to quit United.

Gifted

The slip of an Irish boy who had become a household star reckoned that he couldn't go on in football any longer.

It was hard to comprehend. Why should such a gifted young man who seemed to have everything want to throw it all away?

But in reflection, while he might have left young, he started young and played for 11 seasons in the First Division.

If he had got into the first team at 21 and retired 11 years later at 32 nobody would have raised an eyebrow. Best just happened to live his career a little sooner than most!

So when people say that he wasted his career they should remember that by the time he quit Old Trafford he had played 466 league, cup and European games and scored 178 goals.

Best led soccer into the swinging 60s and was football's answer to The Beatles.

Indeed, after an astonishing display in Lisbon in 1966,

DAVID MEEK
witnessed George
Best's great footballing
moments as Manchester
United correspondent of
the city's evening paper.
Here's his recollection of
those fabulous days

when he virtually destroyed Benfica single-handedly, the Portuguese press christened him El Beatle.

Manager Matt Busby had ordered his troops to protect their 3-2 first-leg lead and play safely but, with Best sparkling – scoring twice in the opening six minutes – they won 5-1, and their prized star became world famous.

A bemused Busby beamed:

"When we made our plans,

George must have had cotton

wool stuffed in his ears!"

Two years later, United won the European Cup against Benfica at Wembley.

Normal time ended with the game at 1-1 and it wasn't looking good for Busby's boys. But once again, Best produced the inspired touch.

A minute into extra-time he took the ball in a wide curve round the goalkeeper to clip it into an empty net.

Benfica were broken and lost 4-1 as Busby fulfilled his dream just 10 years after the Munich air crash – and he knew just how much it was due to George Best.



SIX OF THE BEST: George hits one of his six goals against Northampton in an FA Cup fifth-round clash in February, 1970. United won 8-2.

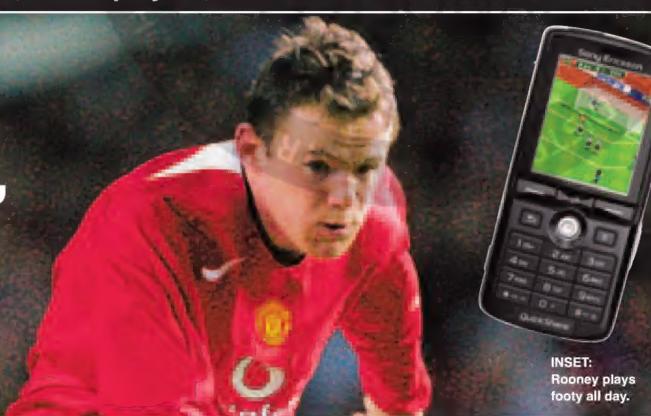
SPORT 24

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glitz and glamour into the beautiful game

We were addict chasing Bestie

THE amazing thing about George Best is everything you have read, heard or will hear about him is true. Completely and controversially true.

The brilliance, booze, birds and, in the end, the self-destruct button he pushed are all part of this story of a wayward genius.

I was lucky enough to meet him, drink with him and, yes, try and persuade him that he didn't really need another bottle.

But he did. He always did. Best will not receive a lot of sympathy for letting go of his last chance in life although for so many he will remain 'Good Old George'.

The boys at Chelsea Fire Brigade were so used to picking him up from the gutter he had a permanent camp bed inside their King's Road Station.

Many times he awoke there the next morning, dusted himself down and went back to his favourite London watering hole.

Catch

Nothing to be proud of, you will say, and of course you are right, but we are not talking about normality here. We are talking about a boy from Belfast born with a gift in his feet that no other from Britain had been blessed with.

A boy thrown into the 60s as football's first Beatle. A footballer so many of us in journalism chased and failed to catch, like a stream of top defenders across the world.

So there we were, out-



BRIAN WOOLNOUGH
tells of the days when he tried to keep up with a football genius

side a house in London in the early 70s.

Hundreds of us, peering upwards, knocking on the door, shouting his name and taking it in turns to see if Best was inside.

It was the morning after the night before at Stamford Bridge when Best had been sent off and Manchester United's 10 men won the game.

A night when former Chelsea manager Dave Sexton had transfer-listed Peter Osgood for not trying. Yes, quite a night.

And Best had gone missing. United didn't know where he was. He had left Stamford Bridge and disappeared into the night.

Alleged sightings were constant the next day and we ended up at a mystery address in west London.

It was one of my first big door-stepping jobs, waiting. I have lost count of the number of hours I waited for Best.

He finally emerged around five o'clock, unshaven, smiling, long hair and with, of course, a stunning girl on his arm.

Who will ever forget the story of him in bed with Miss World, surrounded by bank notes and champagne bottles and the hotel

off? He probably didn't know her name. Why should he? This was an era in football that belonged to one of its greatest talents.

But it is a tragic story. The first British superstar and the first footballer unable to cope with fame.

Crowds swarming to see him, girls screaming at football matches as if it was a pop concert.

Scared

He was the first who needed a bodyguard.

There was Puskas, there was Pele... then there was George Best.

In an era when defenders were still allowed to kick lumps out of forwards, he danced around them as if they were not there.

Who will ever forget the image of him falling into the arms of the late Sir Matt Busby after United had won the European Cup Final?

Who will forget him shining like a diamond at the Stadium of Light against Benfica?

Who will ever forget the story of him in bed with Miss World, surrounded by bank notes and champagne bottles and the hotel



THE BEST BY A LONG WAY:
George wheels away in delight after putting United 2-1 up in extra time against Benfica in the 1968 European Cup Final and (inset) with the trophy



waiter, bringing more bubbly, asking him politely 'George, where did it all go wrong?' A true story.

We hope his drinking and self-destruct will be a lesson to today's players with not half his ability.

George did the same 40 years ago but then he drank it all.

Like the time he was paid handsomely to attend a dinner in London on the one condition he was sober.

The organiser met him, chauffeured him, walked with him but couldn't prevent George getting p***ed and abusing a shocked

London gathering. Like the time he was in the make-up room getting ready for his regular appearance on Sky Sports' Saturday afternoon show.

Great

He never made the studio, turning right instead of left and heading for the pub. These are sad stories of a fallen superstar.

I first got to know him when he played for Fulham with Rodney Marsh.

Great showmen, great fun. Usual place, usual time after the game. King's Road, King's ran-

som, king-size hangover. He was engaging company when he was sober, talking football for hours.

He used to sit in his favourite pub for days, sipping white wine with total strangers and re-living memories.

Sadly, too many wanted to buy him a drink instead of buying him some time.

He cut a sad figure. A pathetic one. Someone who had given up the will to live. A footballing genius who let it all go.

Those who never saw him play ask how someone looking like he did at the end could have been such a wonderful talent.

There are not enough videos to do him justice. Had he played today ... he, enough looking back.

I'll never forget George. I'm desperately trying only to remember the good times.

Life 'n crimes of idol

Born: 22 May 1946, Belfast.

1962 - Signed by Manchester United's legendary manager Matt Busby as a 16-year-old.

1963 - Makes his first-team debut for United against West Brom.

1964 - Makes his Northern Ireland debut before the age of 18 against Wales.

1965 - Wins the First Division championship with United.

1967 - Lifts the title for a second time.

1968 - Scores a superb solo goal as United claim the European Cup with a 4-1 victory over Benfica.

1968 - Named Football Writers' Footballer of the Year and European Footballer of the Year.

1970 - Sent off while playing for Northern Ireland for throwing mud at the referee.

1974 - After a series of fall-outs with manager Tommy Docherty, Best announces his retirement as he quits United.

1975 - Returns to English football as he joins Stockport.

1976 - Enjoys a season with Fulham.

1977 - Plays the last of his 37 games for Northern Ireland.

1978 - Marries first wife Angie in Las Vegas.

1979 - Moves to Scotland to join Hibs.

1981 - Becomes father of son Calum.

1982 - Plays for Golden Bay in America after previous spells with LA Aztecs, San Jose Earthquakes and Fort Lauderdale Strikers.

1983 - Last-ever game in British football for Bournemouth.

1984 - Two months in jail for drink-driving. Divorces with Angie.

1988 - Facing bankruptcy, friends organise a Testimonial in Belfast which attracts 20,000 fans and raises £75,000.

1990 - An apparently drunken appearance on the Wogan chat-show attracts a storm of protest from viewers.

1995 - Marries air-hostess Alex Perry, 23.

1998 - Joins Sky Sports as a pundit.

1998 - Forced out of his Chelsea home after allegations of £70,000 mortgage arrears.

2000 - Diagnosed with severe liver damage after years of alcohol abuse.

2001 - Has anti-alcohol pellets in his stomach.

2002 - Given a liver transplant.

2003 - Sells his European Footballer of the Year award at auction for £150,000.

2003 - Newspaper reports allege drinking binges and affairs.

2004 - Banned for 20 months after admitting a drink-drive charge.

2004 - Divorced on grounds of adultery.

2005 - Totally cleared after allegations of indecently assaulting a teenage girl.

2005 - Admitted to hospital for the final time.

